



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 1, 2007

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OCTOBER PROCLAIMED DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Governor Phil Bredesen has designated October as the month to generate awareness about the talents and abilities of Tennessee's citizens with disabilities.

"Workers with Disabilities: Talent for a Winning Team" is the theme of the 2007 National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The theme calls attention to an untapped personnel resource in this country - persons with disabilities.

"Tennesseans with disabilities represent an underutilized reservoir of ambition, talent and skill," said Bredesen. "I hope employers across Tennessee will be reminded by Disability Awareness Month of the contributions these individuals stand ready to make in the workplace."

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) within the Department of Human Services provides vocational rehabilitation services to Tennesseans with disabilities to help them maximize their contribution to the workforce. Approximately 3,000 individuals with the most significant disabilities were employed after completing rehabilitation programs during fiscal year 2006-07. Some of the challenges faced by these individuals include: traumatic brain injury, blindness and mobility impairments.

"Tennessee's businesses benefit when they provide employment opportunities for Tennesseans with disabilities. They gain talent and a broader, valuable perspective," said Human Services Commissioner Gina Lodge.

Vocational rehabilitation offices across the state as well as seventeen Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers located in rural communities and the residential comprehensive Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna provide numerous services to clients, including vocational training, physical or occupational therapy and transitional life skills. For more information on the centers, visit <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/rehab/trc.htm>

DRS staff are working with businesses and agencies across Tennessee on activities recognizing Disability Employment Awareness Month. Attached is a partial list of scheduled events.

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CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR
400 DEADERICK STREET
NASHVILLE, TN 37243
615.313.4700

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH SCHEDULE

October 9	Talbott Career Center Disability Employment Awareness Program Contact: Natasha Knight (423) 317-1072	Talbott Career Center 6057 W. Andrew Johnson HWY. Alpha Square, Suite 6A Talbott, TN
October 10	Area Recognition Awards Luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. by Southeast Tennessee Placement Consortium Contact: Carol Martin (423) 634-6725	Chattanooga Convention & Trade Center One Carter Plaza Chattanooga, TN
October 11	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Clarksville from Noon to 3 p.m. Contact: Ron Taylor (931-) 648-5560	Clarksville 1241 Highway Drive Clarksville, TN
October 16	Chamber of Commerce Disability Employment Awareness Month Coffee The TN Rehabilitation Center of Shelbyville Contact: Elizabeth Strode (931) 685-5017	Shelbyville 1618 Railroad Avenue Shelbyville, TN
October 16	Carter/Johnson County Workforce Employer Outreach Committee (WEOC) Disability Employment Awareness Month Luncheon at Noon Contact: C-Ann Harris (423) 952-6073	Johnson County Welcome Center 716 South Shady Street Mountain City, TN 37683
October 17	Disability Mentoring Day Contact: Trish Farmer (615) 313-4907	Statewide

October 18	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House and Cleveland Bradley County Proclamation at The TN Rehabilitation Center of Cleveland at 2 p.m. Contact: Delwyn Smith (423) 478-0332, ext. 27	Cleveland 3069 Overlook Drive Suite B Cleveland, TN
October 24	TRC Disability Employment Awareness Day Contact: Gale Demick (615) 459-6811, ext. 246	Smyrna TN Rehabilitation Center 460 Ninth Avenue Smyrna, TN
October 24	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at The TN Rehabilitation Center of Franklin Contact: Patsy Plumlee (615) 790-5509, ext. 114	Franklin 1405-A Brookwood Aveune Franklin, TN
October 25	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The TN Rehabilitation Center of Columbia Contact: Libby Heflen (931) 380-2550	Columbia 206 Wayne Street Columbia, TN
October 25	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The TN Rehabilitation Center of Dyersburg Contact: Ronda Baker (731) 286-8315, ext. 114	Dyersburg 1365 Morgan Road Dyersburg, TN
October 31	Bristol Chamber of Commerce's Business and Industry Council's Disability Employment Awareness Month Program at 7:45 a.m. Contact: Karen Witcher, Bristol Chamber (423) 989-4850	Bristol 20 Volunteer Parkway Bristol, TN